

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 606 to H.R. 6416.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 607 to H. Res. 828 motion to table.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 607 to H. Res. 828 motion to refer.

If I were present, I would have voted NO on roll call number 609 to H. Res. 944 ordering the previous question.

If I were present, I would have voted NO on roll call number 610 to H. Res. 944.

If I were present, I would have voted NO on roll call number 613 to H.R. 5143.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 614 to H.R. 6076.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 616 to H.R. 5790.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 615 to House Amendment to S. 2971.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 611 to H.R. 1219.

If I were present, I would have voted YES on roll call number 612 to S. 3028.

TRIBUTE TO NKUMU ISAAC
KATALY & "THE NEW LIFE
PROJECT"

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to honor The Kataly Band for its many years of dedication and contribution to the arts in New York City and our country.

Nkumu Isaac Kataly was born in Kinshasa, the capital city of the Democratic Republic of Congo where he spent one half of his life before moving to New York City in 1996. Music became Mr. Kataly's path to navigate the world. Music has become Mr. Kataly's cornerstone, which holds the fragments of his identity together.

Music is Nkumu's passion. The study of musical notes or beats, especially their movements, patterns, and how they are parallel to human cultures, remains his lifelong fascination. So, artistically, he discovered one tool after the other. Nkumu's musical concept was cultivated via the "Mbonda" or "Ngoma" (drum) and movements (dance).

Before his new journey, Mr. Kataly had the opportunity to accomplish tremendous things as a young artist. He got to perform at renowned art venues throughout the United States and has had the privilege to work with the best artists Congo sends out to the world. He performed alongside various artists.

Nkumu has presented at the Apollo Theater, Manhattan Center, Prospect Park, Summer Stage, St. Nick's Pub, and more. Additionally, he has performed at various prestigious universities throughout the United States such as Columbia University, John Jay College, Baruch College, Harvard University, and University of Chicago.

His devotion to humanitarian causes continues through his music. He devotes a significant amount of his spare time to community leadership and development. He is currently the technical director of a musical group in the

Living Church of God's Divine Provision. There he uses African aesthetics, music and thought processes, to exemplify how Congo influences every music style throughout the African Diaspora.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mr. Kataly and The New Life Project for their consistently remarkable contributions to the arts and the African Diaspora.

RETIRING FROM CONGRESS

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as I reach the end of my 24-year congressional career, I want to begin by thanking the constituents of Florida's 3rd (later renamed 5th) congressional district, for giving me the opportunity to serve you, and to serve the great State of Florida, and the United States of America. I will always remember and revere this remarkable institution of government, the House of Representatives, the People's House.

As I look back on my years of service, among the many things my loyal and outstanding staff and I accomplished over the years, there are a few special items that stand out. First, I will always remember working day and night across the aisle to obtain a Congressional Gold Medal for the Montford Point Marines; the dedicated, African American patriots, who were often overlooked by the history books.

These marines enlisted to defend our nation during a time when here at home, African Americans faced terrible discrimination and civil rights abuses. Years before Jackie Robinson and decades prior to Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, they risked their lives and fought overseas to defend democracy against one of the most dangerous regimes ever to rule over much of Europe, that of Nazi Germany. And unlike the Tuskegee Airmen and others who were praised for their valiant efforts, the Montford Point Marines were never given recognition until I worked with my colleagues on Capitol Hill to pass a bill, which became law, to grant the marines who were trained at Montford Point a Congressional Gold Medal. I vividly remember when a handful of these now elderly gentlemen watched the final vote from the House gallery in tears, as the Members of Congress, defying House protocol for a brief moment, turned and gave them a standing ovation for their bravery. A short time thereafter, the Montford Point Marines were received with honors in the Capitol for a ceremony in their honor, granting them a Congressional Gold Medal.

I am also very proud of my 24 years of service on the House Veterans Affairs Committee. In fact, I became the first African American female to serve as Ranking Member of the Committee, as I felt it was my duty after serving on the committee to take charge during an extremely tumultuous time at the Agency for Veterans' Affairs. During my two year term as Ranking Member we worked on a number of issues to improve the efficacy of the VA to better serve our nation's veterans, in particular, in the areas of veteran homeless-

ness, assisting the rapidly expanding category of women veterans, psychological issues and PTSD, and working to decrease the wait times at VA health facilities.

Since first coming to Congress, I have been fighting for the benefits that veterans were promised when they entered the service. When I first came to Washington, to offset the limited space for veterans' burials in Florida and around the country, I introduced legislation to establish new National Cemeteries in South Florida and in Jacksonville. I also introduced legislation to expand and improve the National Veteran's Cemetery system, and championed legislation expanding the health and long-term care benefits that America's veterans' receive, improving veterans' education benefits, and expediting claims processing. Most recently, I secured a new Veterans' Outpatient Clinic for Jacksonville. This facility consolidated most of the veterans' services that had been scattered around the city into one facility. In addition, the Gainesville VA Medical Center was completed with an additional \$51.5 million included at my request, and the Orlando VA Medical Center, with my advocacy over the years, is finally completed and attending patients. And under my watch, Congress passed the largest budget in the history of the VA and also passed assured funding for the VA, which ensures that veterans' healthcare is not subject to the political winds of Washington.

I am proud of my many accomplishments over the years in the arena of Transportation and Infrastructure development, where, in my role as a key member on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I was able to make numerous positive, tangible contributions to our nation's transportation system. By obtaining hundreds of millions of dollars in federal projects, both for my congressional district (which is one of the most underserved in the State of Florida), and for my state, I was awarded with the slogan, "Corrine Delivers." These projects ranged from bridge construction and reconstruction, to the building of courthouses, roads, ports and buildings. They also consisted of numerous multi modal transportation projects, such as SunRail in Central Florida, Lynx, and Amtrak passenger rail, to give Floridians and Americans across the nation the option to travel and commute without having to use an automobile. And across my district, from Gainesville to Jacksonville to Orlando and even the smaller cities in between, I obtained millions of dollars over the years for their public transportation system, including city buses. In Gainesville in fact, the newly upgraded bus depot was named after me.

Yet perhaps my greatest achievement was in the arena of civil rights. I am proud to have been the first African American to serve the State of Florida as an elected federal Member of Congress. In this capacity, I served as the voice of minorities and the traditionally underserved for more than two decades. I was given the platform and the ability to promote change and fairness in the areas of voting rights, health care parity, educational access and equality, access to fairly priced housing, accessible and moderately priced public transportation, greater gender equality, racial disparities in our criminal justice system, and of course, for full funding of our Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid recipients. Lastly, in the area of higher education, I led the charge, along with my colleagues in the Congressional